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MOTHER HEARS CONVICTED SPY MAY BE FREED

New Britain, Conn., Aug.

26 (AP) — Mrs. Mary Downey, weary upon her return from Red China, Friday said it was a Red Cross official who told her her imprisoned son may be released eventually for good behavior.

Herson, John, 30, has been jailed in communist China on spy charges. Back in her home here after two weeks in Red China for visits with her son, Mrs. Downey was asked to clarify seemingly conflicting statements about his possible release.

"Two years ago I was told by communist officials that he could be granted leniency for good behavior," she said. "On this visit, a Red Cross official reiterated the statement." News reports quoted Mrs. Downey as saying in a Hong Kong conference earlier that Peking authorities hinted at eventual release of her son for good behavior, though not for some years.

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